

Intercultural Communication Competences for Access Services Staff in a Diverse and Inclusive Environment

Margaret Adeogun

margaretadeogun@yahoo.com

Outline

- **Definition and Discussion of Multicultural Competency**
- **Diversity and Its Causes**
- **Diversity in Higher Education**
- **The Library Challenge**
- **Cultural Competency Model**
- **Multicultural Communication Skills**

What is Intercultural Competency?

It is the ability to **communicate** and **relate appropriately** and **effectively** with people of other cultures, social groups, in a way that valued norms, rules and expectations are not violated.

What it involves:

- Knowledge
- Attitude
- Skills

Ethnic and Racial Diversity

- One size no longer fits all;
- Appropriately to the preferences of patrons from varying ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds.

Causes of Diversity

Globalization

- increased human mobility
- increased capital and knowledge
- increased interconnectedness,
- increased cultural and linguistic diversity.
- "Our world , and our lives, are being shaped by the conflicting trends of globalization and identity."* Manuel Castels

The knowledge Society

- Receptiveness of new ideas
- Shift from close to self disclosure
- Unveiling of social & Psychological orientation
- Increased demand for equity and equality.

Changing Immigration Patterns

B4 1970-largely from Europe
After 1970-Latin America
Increase people of color

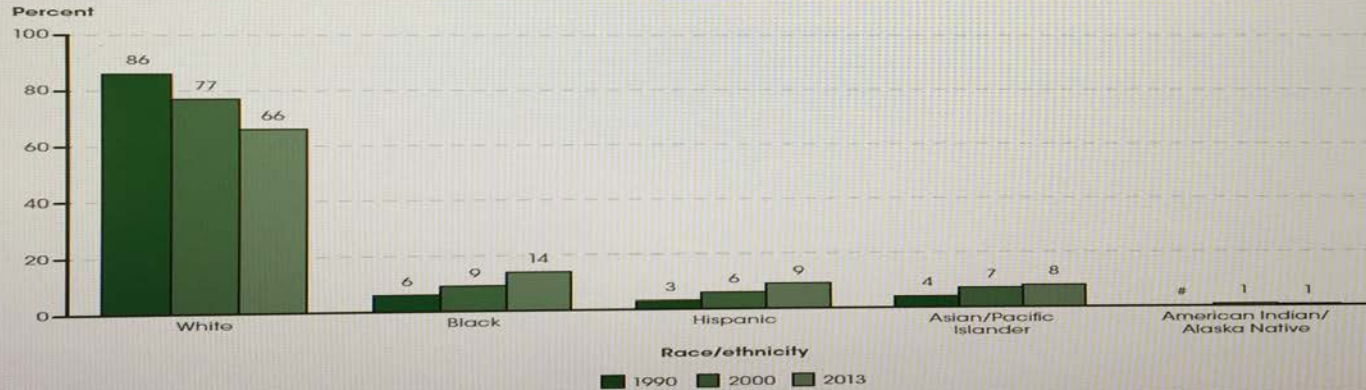
Changing US Demographics

By 2050:

- Hispanics—30% popln (3x)
- Asian American popln (2x)
- African American popln at 13%
- Whites will gradually become a smaller majority as minority popln increase in number

HE Student Enrolment by Race/Ethnicity, 1990-2013 (IPEDS Statistics)

Figure 19.3. Percentage distribution of total postbaccalaureate student enrollment in degree-granting institutions, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1990 through 2013



Rounds to zero.
NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Prior to 2010, separate data on Asian students and Pacific Islander students were not available. Degree-granting institutions grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Details do not sum to 100 for 1990 because of rounding and for 2013 because not all racial/ethnic groups are displayed in the figure.
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment

Why Multicultural Competency Skills?

- The world is getting smaller;
- diversity is proliferating
- Nations and communities are becoming more diverse
- One size no long fits all.
- diversified **cross-border higher education landscape**
- **Student/staff/faculty mobility** continues to grow apace, and this is creating a need for **cross-cultural competences**

Library Literature Focus on Diversity

Past

- ❖ Race
- ❖ gender
- ❖ Geographical diversity

Present

- ❖ Race
- ❖ Ethnicity
- ❖ Socioeconomic Xterstics
- ❖ Gender
- ❖ Sexual Orientation
- ❖ Age
- ❖ Cultural background
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Disability.

Diversity Factors Expanded.

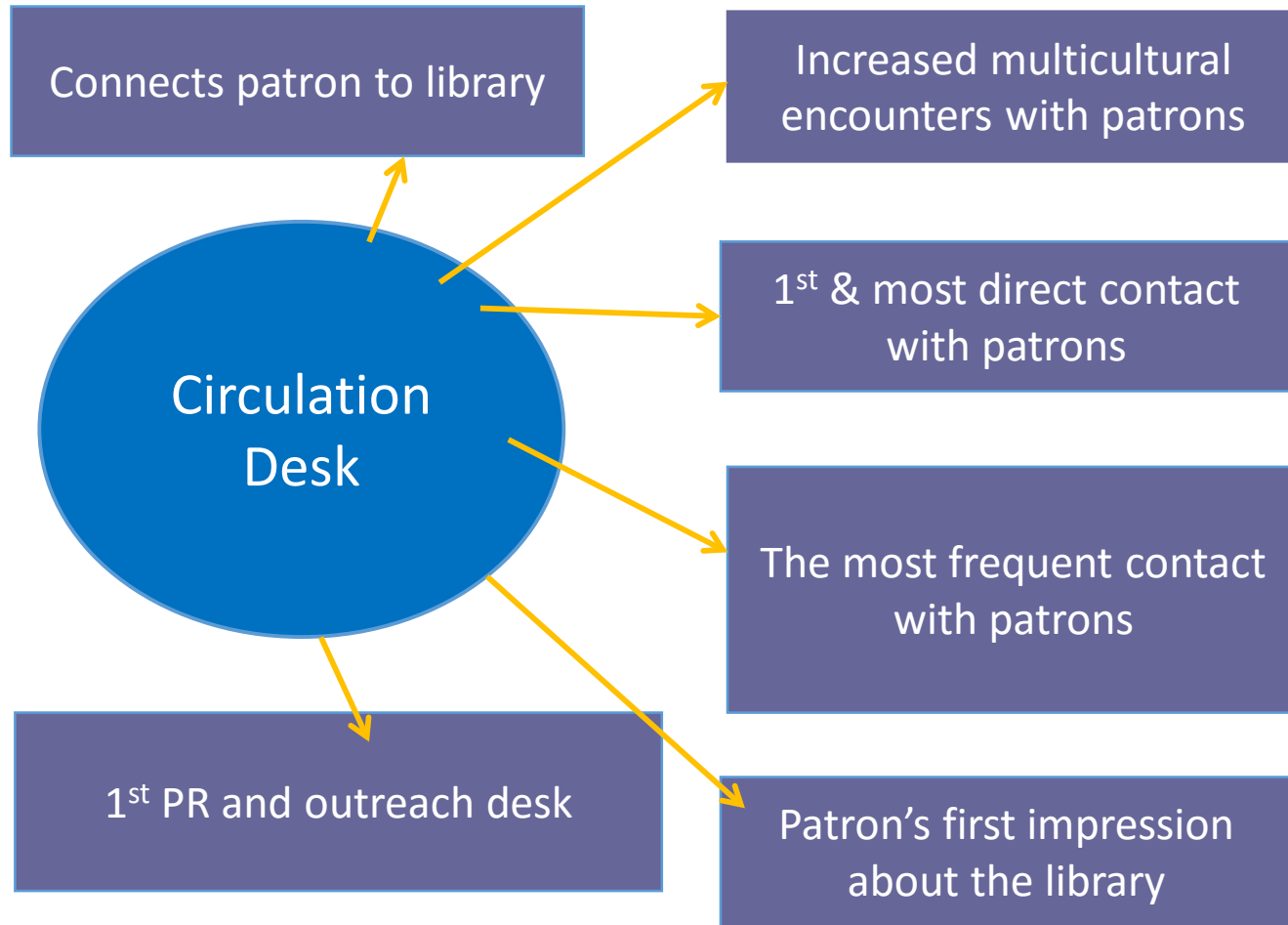
Personality (traits, skills and abilities).

Internal Characteristics (gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, intelligence, sexual orientation, dis/ability).

External Characteristics (culture, nationality, age, religion, marital or parental status).

Library Challenge

- ❖ Patron characteristics more varied, complex;
- ❖ Customized and personalized service required;
- ❖ Demand-driven model;
- ❖ Highly changing demographic trends;
- ❖ Need for increased competency in serving diverse multicultural groups as the US popln becomes more diverse.



What is diversity?

Acknowledging,
understanding, accepting,
valuing **any significant
difference** that
distinguishes one
individual from another.

Educational level, life/work exp
socio –econ bckgd, personality,
abilities/disabilities



**“Diversity is
the mix.
Inclusion is
making the mix
work,” Andrés
Tapia**

www.RedShoeMovement.com

**Managing and
integrating varied
lifestyles**

How Do We Make Diversity Work?

The AACU (2007) aptly described **inclusivity** as “the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, ethno-cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase one’s **awareness**, **content knowledge**, **cognitive sophistication**, and **empathic understanding** of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.”

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graph LR; A([Inter-cultural Communication Goals]) --> B[Ensure equal treatment and equal opportunities for all irrespective of differences.]; A --> C[Remove uncertainties; engage in effective communication.]; A --> D[Improve staff's multicultural skill sets for effective functioning in a diverse & inclusive environment.]; A --> E[Create a receptive & positive environment for patrons irrespective of their types];
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Inter-cultural Communication Goals

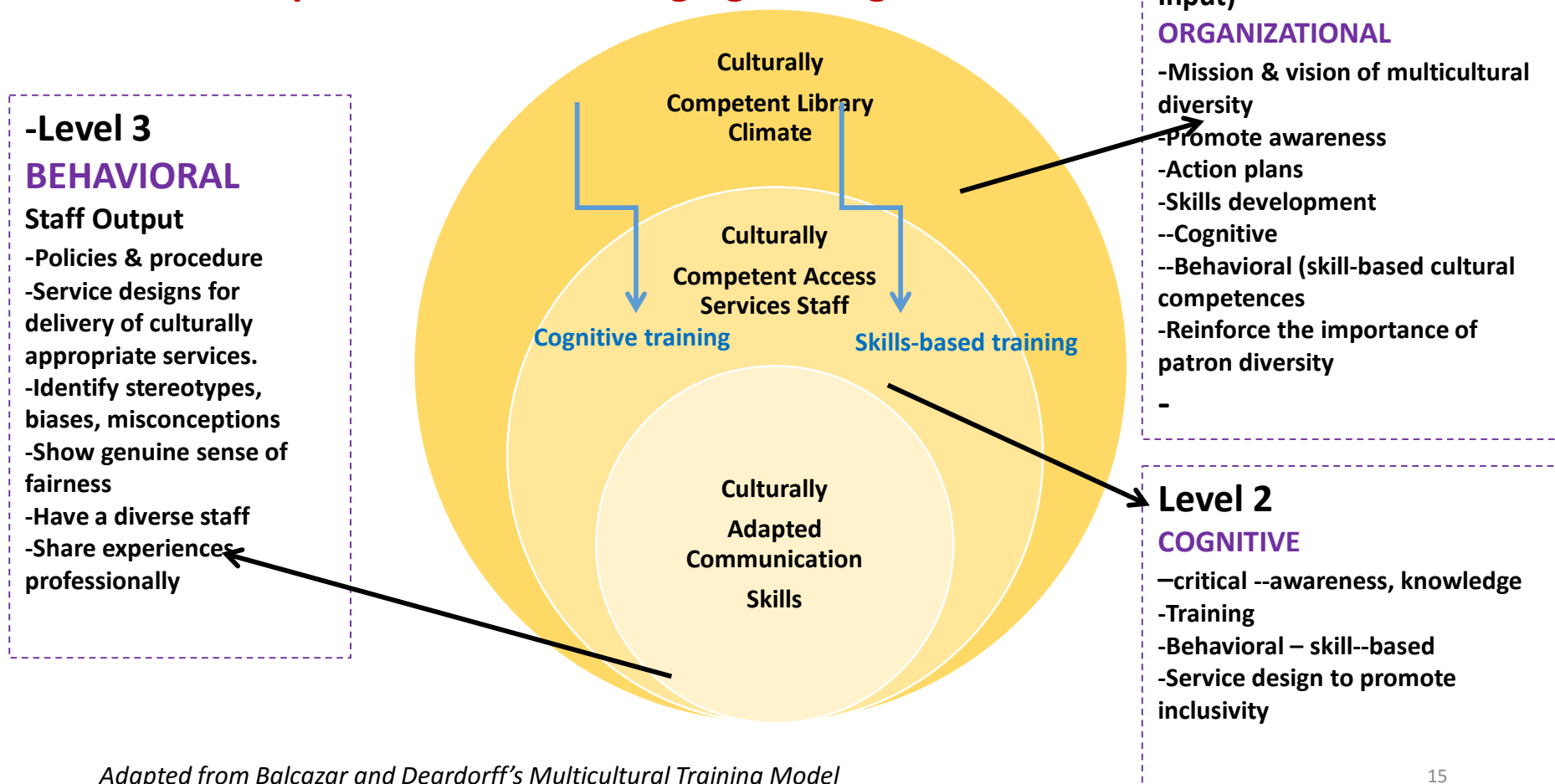
Ensure equal treatment and equal opportunities for all irrespective of differences.

Remove uncertainties; engage in effective communication.

Improve staff's multicultural skill sets for effective functioning in a diverse & inclusive environment.

Create a receptive & positive environment for patrons irrespective of their types

Cultural Competence Model: Bridging Strategies



Adapted from Balcazar and Deardorff's Multicultural Training Model

Outcomes

Internal Outcomes

- flexible
- adaptable
- empathetic
- ethno-relative

Quality
User
Experience

External Outcomes

- observable evidence
- 3rd cultured

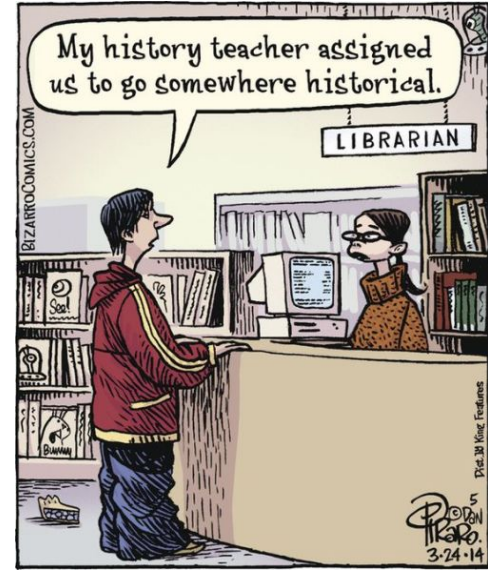
Mostly:

We communicate with ppl like us;
Can predict communication
behavior because we think alike.



Intercultural encounter;
There is a lack of similar
range of knowledge and
experience to draw.

Beware of cultural
differences and
communication styles.



Vocabulary

- Speak slowly using accurate standard pronunciation (going, gonna).
- Pause more frequently
- Avoid library jargons (citation, abstract, article).
- Avoid slangs, metaphors, jokes & unfamiliar terms.

Idioms

Exprs with separate meanings of their own.

- Acting up; throw in the towel
- heads up

Avoid idioms bc of cultural differences



Use of Words.

Language reflect culture
“Checkout” (examining or checking, paying for books).

Cultural Barriers

Eye contact.
Space.
Directness
Head nod/Affirmative nod
Appointment time
Gestures
Social class

Attitude

**Avoid negative attitude – Be open.
Maintain eye contact and ask questions for clarification**

Use Top-down Strategy

**Focus on meaning and not individual sound
Identify the general topic of the communication**

Repetition

Repeat important words and concepts. Use synonyms for difficult words to help explain meaning.

Be tolerant of ambiguity

Avoid showing personal discomfort.

Communicating with Older Patrons

Older people
have unique
personalities

Quiet and
easy going

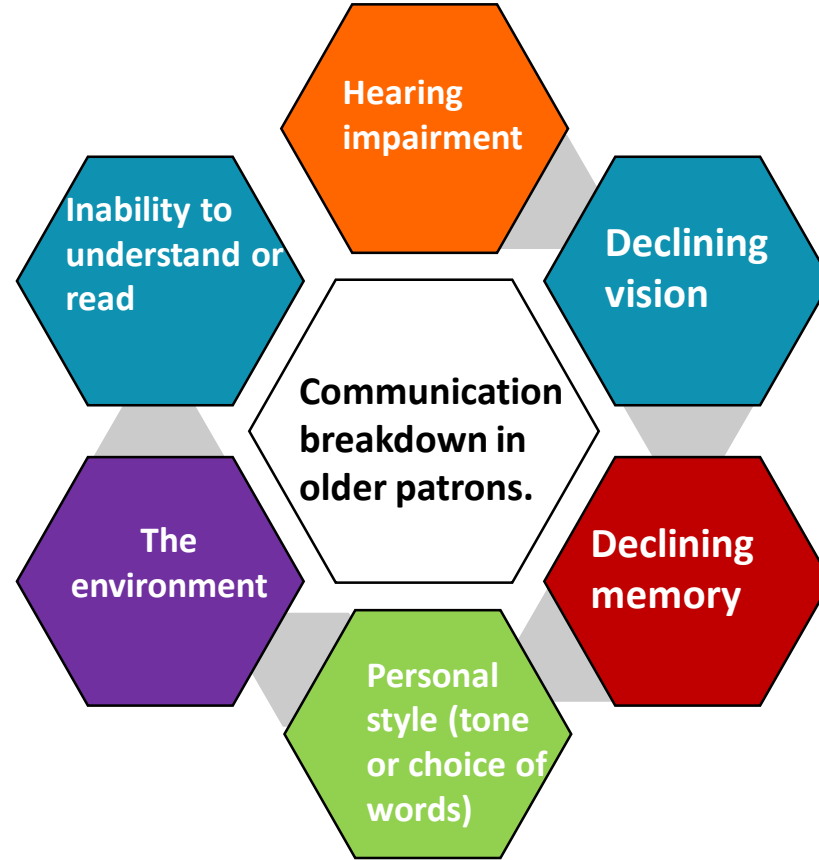
Loud,
assertive,
easily irritated

Some listen
and nod

Not receptive
to change;
Talk a lot



Barriers to Effective Communication with older patrons.



Communicating with Visually Impaired Patrons

**Identify
yourself**

**Don't make
references to
visual clues**

**Use your
normal
speaking
voice**

**Speak slowly
and clearly**



Communicating with Patrons of Different Sexual Orientation

- Avoid displaying any negative attitude to patrons of different sexual orientation than yours. Such impedes communication
- Sensitive to issues and attitudes of sexual orientation
- Avoid biased expressions that degrade someone's sexual orientation.

Behavior to Avoid

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graph TD; A([Behavior to Avoid]); B[Racism & Classism -- false narratives & stereotyping] --> A; C[Rumination. Talking about a negative exp. patrons] --> A; D[Storytelling. Neg. narrative of patron differences] --> A; E[Categoryzing .Neg. Grouping of patrons by race or ethnicity] --> A; F[Ethnocentrism. Feeling of cultural superiority] --> A; G[Profiling. This never promotes inclusivity] --> A; H[Ethnic Ref. Identifying patrons by race/ethnic/social groupings] --> A; I[Accents. Do not asks about their accents.] --> A;
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Racism & Classism – false narratives & stereotyping

Rumination. Talking about a negative exp. patrons

Storytelling. Neg. narrative of patron differences

Categoryzing .Neg. Grouping of patrons by race or ethnicity

Ethnocentrism. Feeling of cultural superiority

Profiling. This never promotes inclusivity

Ethnic Ref. Identifying patrons by race/ethnic/social groupings

Accents. Do not asks about their accents.

Behavior to Embrace

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graph BT; A[Develop a third culture] --> H([Behavior to Embrace]); B[Embrace openness] --> H; C[Focus on what defines your patrons – talents & skills] --> H; D[Avoid the use of labels as identification] --> H; E[Cultural relativism. Understand ppl from their point of view.] --> H; F[Create anti-discrimination policy] --> H; G[Share experiences with colleagues] --> H; H2[Recruit a diverse workforce] --> H;
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Develop a third culture

Embrace openness

Focus on what defines your patrons – talents & skills

Avoid the use of labels as identification

Cultural relativism.
Understand ppl from their point of view.

Create anti-discrimination policy

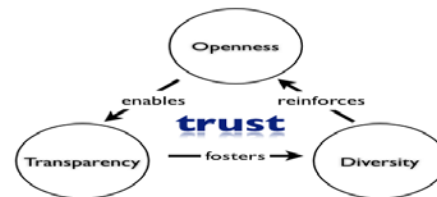
Share experiences with colleagues

Recruit a diverse workforce



Hey!
WELCOME
We're *very* **GLAD**
you're here!

OPENNESS



Network Culture

A vibrant rainbow arches across a clear blue sky, its colors transitioning from red on the left to violet on the right. Below the rainbow, a dense, green forest covers a hillside, stretching across the bottom of the frame. The overall scene is bright and cheerful.

Thank you



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